

VOX

VOX

CITY CHURCH

CONTACT INFO

Email: info@voxcc.com

Website: <http://voxcc.com>

INTRODUCTION

THE GOSPEL IS THE “GOOD NEWS” THAT JESUS Christ saves sinners. Romans chapter 1 says that the Gospel “... is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.” We believe this power changes everything. Our world is broken and in need of redemption, and God has sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross in order to make all things new. Jesus is reconciling all things to himself (Colossians 1:15-23), and his primary means of doing that on earth is through his covenant people: the Church.

It is the Church’s role to proclaim the excellencies of Christ (1Peter 2:9). We do this by forming new communities of light, covenant communities that live out the Gospel in word and deed. Our heart is to see a new expression form in Cape Town that will proclaim the Gospel in a fresh way that blesses this great city. We want to see South Africans reconciled to God and to each other for God’s glory.

If this document is in your hands, it’s because we’re asking you to dream with us about starting a new church in Cape Town. You may be one of those visionaries who are ready to sign up today, just for the sake of doing something new. Or you may be the more careful, analytical type who is already thinking of a million questions. Either way, we want you to read on. This document has taken shape through months of praying, planning, and thinking. Everything here has been written for a reason.

There is much work to be done. People are living – and dying – without Christ. But this dream isn’t about nameless, faceless people; it’s about people you know. You have friends, relatives, and work associates who wouldn’t set foot in an established church. Maybe they’re sceptical, maybe they’ve had a bad experience or maybe they think church is for “church people.” It’s time we stopped expecting them to come to us. It’s time for us to take the Kingdom of Jesus to them.

“It’s time we stopped expecting them to come to us. It’s time for us to take the Kingdom of Jesus to them.”

CAPE TOWN

STRATEGIC AND INFLUENTIAL. TREMENDOUS ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIVERSITY.

AS A CITY, CAPE TOWN IS ONE OF ONLY five cities in Africa to be ranked as a 'global city'. According to this ranking system it is considered a 'Gamma World City', on a par with cities such as Stuttgart, Chennai, Brisbane, Vancouver and Seattle in terms of international influence and stature¹. As such, it stands as one of the five most influential cities on the continent of Africa, the second most influential city in the country of South Africa, (after Johannesburg), and within the 100 most influential cities on the planet.

At present, conservative estimates suggest the population of the greater Cape Town metro is at about 3.5 million people, making it the second largest city in South Africa, after Johannesburg. The City Bowl area of Cape Town (the CBD and its immediate neighborhoods, under the shadow of Table Mountain and Lion's Head) had a total number of 48, 540 residents accounted for during the 2001 Census². Since the census there has seen a significant influx of residents into the City Bowl as well as a large migration of foreign Africans, many of whom are not yet South African citizens and would therefore not be registered in census counts. Given these factors, it is likely that the total population of the City Bowl is well in excess of 70, 000 people. Enormous ethnic and racial diversity exists within this large group of people which includes English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking South Africans as well as numerous West Africans (Both French and English speaking), Zimbabweans, Kenyans, Congolese, Zambians, Malawians and people from even further afield such as Somalis and Ethiopians. Added to this diversity, numerous smaller European minorities also live and work within the city bowl limits. As well as a sizeable population, the City Bowl is also the central business, social and cultural hub of the broader Cape Town area. In all three areas it exerts enormous influence, setting trends in all sectors for the rest of the city. The city hosts Naspers, Africa's largest media company and is a hub for journalists and other media professionals³. For the most part, Cape Town is considered to be a 'western' city and this is particularly true of the City Bowl.

The vast majority of churches serving this area are mainline denominational churches, usually with heavily liberal theological tendencies. Evangelical presence is limited, with most established evangelical churches existing in the suburbs, outside the perimeter of the city bowl. The spiritual climate of the city bowl is drenched in pluralism and secularism. Alongside this pluralism, and in contrast to it, one encounters a large Muslim population, particularly in the neighborhoods of Bo-Kaap, (Schotsche Kloof) and Woodstock.

GOSPEL PRESENCE NEEDED

CAPE TOWN IS IN NEED OF A GOSPEL presence. The city centre is growing, while the presence of the church is declining. Churches are moving out of the city and there fails to be a solid evangelical presence. Momentum and enthusiasm continue to build for church planting in the city of Cape Town, as its leaders are realizing the need for a Gospel presence in this urban context. Given the infrastructure and influence of the city, and the great spiritual need, *it is hard to think of a more strategic place to plant a church that is aimed at starting a church planting movement in South Africa and building it up into greater Africa.*

CHURCH

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

peoples praise you! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy..." and The Westminster Catechism reminds us that "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

THE CHURCH EXISTS TO GLORIFY GOD BY enjoying Him and by calling all peoples on earth to find their joy in Him. Psalm 67:3-4 says: "Let all the

FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Mark 1:14-15 tell us that "... Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

THE CHURCH EXISTS TO MAKE CHRIST'S invisible Kingdom visible – to extend the rule and reign of God into all aspects of life and culture.

FOR THE MISSION OF GOD

heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

THE CHURCH EXISTS TO FULLY CARRY OUT the mission of God on earth. Matthew 28:18-20 tells us "All authority has been given to Me, in

CHURCH PLANTING: THE ESSENTIAL TASK

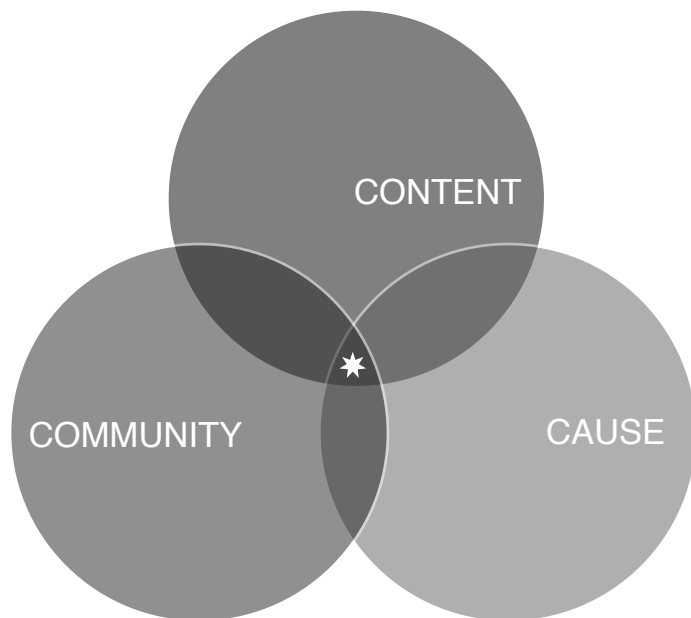
CHURCH PLANTING IS THE ESSENTIAL TASK OF THE great commission and was the primary New Testament strategy for extending God's Kingdom and fulfilling His missionary mandate. The book of Acts depicts the spread of a church-planting movement throughout Asia and Europe. Almost all of Paul's letters were written to new churches that either he, or someone he had discipled, had started. William Tinsley writes: "To remove the strategy of church planting from the New Testament would, in effect, remove all Scripture beyond the Gospels...The Apostles saw the expansion of new churches in the world as the pivotal cog through which the life-transforming power of God would be transferred to the world."

VISION

A GOSPEL-CENTERED CHURCH

OUR VISION FOR VOX CITY CHURCH IS that we would be a gospel-centered church community. Why? Simply because we believe that the Gospel is at the heart of God's glory, God's Kingdom, and God's mission. The Bible speaks of the Gospel as "the Gospel of God" (Mark 1:14), "the Gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4), "the Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matt. 24:14), and the Gospel that is to be "preached to all the nations" (Mark 13:10). If we are going to be about God's glory, God's kingdom, and God's mission, we have to be about the Gospel! So what does it mean to be a church that is "about the Gospel?" Churches often obscure the glory of the Gospel by reducing it to something less than it is. Some understand the Gospel only as doctrinal content to be believed. Others diminish it to a personal, subjective experience of God's presence. Still others see it as a social cause to be championed. The Gospel is none of these, and yet it is all of these. A truly Gospel-centered church understands and embraces the fullness of the Gospel as content, community, and cause. *The next page explains and illustrates these three interdependent aspects of the Gospel.*

THE GOSPEL IN THREE PERSPECTIVES



WE SEEK TO BE A CHURCH THAT PROCLAIMS the Gospel, experiences the transforming power of the Gospel, and demonstrates the Gospel in our city through practical expressions of mercy, justice, compassion, and restoration.

GOSPEL CONTENT

THE GOSPEL IS CONTENT: THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE THAT IS to be preached or proclaimed (Mark 1:14; Acts 14:21; Rom 1:15; 1 Peter 1:12). It is the story of God’s redemption of his fallen creation. It is the good news that God has acted in history to conquer evil and reconcile sinners to himself through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor 15:1-12).

GOSPEL COMMUNITY

THE GOSPEL IS COMMUNITY: THE GOSPEL IS NOT JUST A message to be believed, but also a power to be experienced (Rom 1:16). The Gospel shapes a new community as those who were formerly God’s enemies are reconciled to Him (Rom 5:10) and adopted into his family (Gal 4:4-7). The church is not a place, but a people – a community that is continually being reformed and renewed by the transforming power of the Gospel (Col. 1:6).

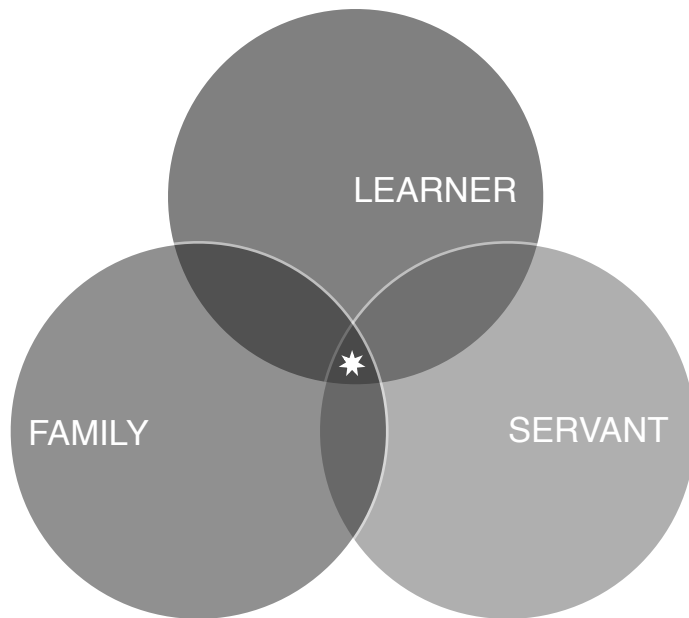
GOSPEL CAUSE

THE GOSPEL IS CAUSE: THE GOSPEL IS A CALL TO ACTION, A declaration that “...the kingdom of God is at hand...” (Mark 1:15). God is not just interested in the salvation of humans, but in the restoration of all of creation to its original ‘good’ (Gen 1:31; Rom 8:19-22).

IDENTITIES

THE PHRASE “GOSPEL-CENTERED” CAN EASILY BECOME A BUZZWORD DEVOID OF ANY REAL meaning. To prevent this, it’s helpful to consider how the gospel changes people. After all, a Gospel-centered church is simply a community of Gospel-centered people. The Gospel does not just affect us corporately; it transforms each of us individually. At VOX City Church, we use the language of identities and rhythms to explain how the Gospel transforms someone from the inside out.

GOSPEL IDENTITIES



WHEN THE GOSPEL TAKES ROOT IN A person, it creates a fundamental change of identity. Those born into sin are reborn in Christ and become “a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Exactly what does this change look and feel like? A Christian’s new identity can be viewed through multiple perspectives or lenses. So, we speak not just of a new identity, but also of our Gospel Identities. The Gospel transforms us in a holistic way that can’t be summarized in just one way of speaking. Through the power of the gospel, we become learners, family, and servants.

LEARNER

BEFORE THE GOSPEL CHANGES US, WE ARE ENSLAVED TO “THE DESIRES OF the flesh and of the mind” (Ephesians 2:1-3). We act as our own gods, pursuing our own desires and committed to our own independence. But through the Gospel, we become “obedient from the heart” to Jesus’ teaching (Romans 6:17-18). We are changed into disciples, or learners – people who want to come under Jesus’ teaching, submit to his ways, and learn what it means to live life for His glory. As learners, we study the Bible to understand what God has said. We practice the disciplines of prayer, solitude, and reflection so that we can discern the leading of the Holy Spirit. We learn from the teaching, training, and wisdom of godly leaders and teachers. We create communities of discipleship so that we can learn from each other. And we engage the world around us so that we can relate, with relevance and wisdom, to those who share our cultural setting.

FAMILY

BEFORE THE GOSPEL CHANGES US, WE ARE “CHILDREN OF WRATH” (Ephesians 2:1-3). We are subject to God’s judgment because of our sin. But through the Gospel, we are adopted into God’s family (Galatians 4:4-7). We become his sons and daughters. We are no longer orphans, alienated from God and each other, but brothers and sisters in God’s family. As family, we live by the “house rules” given in Scripture. We look out for each other and care for one another. We are jealous for the honor of our Father’s good name (Matt 6:9). And we feel love and kinship toward those alienated from God, longing for them to be reconciled to our Father who created them in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).

SERVANT

BEFORE THE GOSPEL CHANGES US, WE LOVE TO “FOLLOW THE WAYS OF this world” (Ephesians 2:1-3). Our sin, which feels like an expression of freedom, actually enslaves us (Romans 6:16). But in the Gospel, God delivers us from our slavery to sin and self so that we can freely serve him by the power of His Spirit (Romans 6:18-22). Released from self-absorption, self-concern, and self-worship, we can joyfully die to ourselves in order to love and serve others, just as Jesus did (Luke 22:27). As servants, we see all of life as service to God. We seek tangible ways to love and serve others. We meet the needs of our city through acts of compassion, mercy, and justice. We joyfully submit to God (James 4:7), to qualified spiritual leaders (Hebrews 13:17), and to each other (Ephesians 5:21). And we cultivate a lifestyle of simplicity and generosity to show that we worship Jesus and not the idols of comfort, affluence, and success.

RHYTHMS

ACTIVELY ENGAGING THE WORLD

THE GOSPEL WILL BE LITTLE MORE than abstract theology unless it finds tangible expression in the stuff of everyday life. Seen through the lens of the Gospel, every event of our lives becomes an opportunity for Gospel formation and Gospel mission. We are called and sent to be the Church – the people of God – everywhere, all the time. Instead of passively experiencing life, we are to actively engage the world around us for the sake of God’s mission and glory. So as a community, we have committed ourselves to the deliberate practice of two simple rhythms as a way of expressing the Gospel in our daily lives. *All core members of VOX City Church will be asked to commit to practicing these rhythms purposefully and intentionally.*

MISSIONAL RHYTHMS

LIVING OUT WE LIVE OUT THE GOSPEL AS PEOPLE IMMERSSED IN THE CULTURE AROUND us. We want to “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” (1 Peter 2:12) The Bible assumes that Christians will actually be living life "among the pagans." The Gospel empowers us to live as God's "sent" people (John 17:18) - missionaries within our own culture. We are shaped by our culture, but not defined by it. We do not isolate ourselves from the world; instead we seek to engage the world around us for the glory of God and the good of humanity.

Living out takes many different forms, including:

- **Loving**, blessing, and serving our neighbors in the culture
- **Listening** to the questions, objections, and concerns people have about God
- **Hanging** out "where people are" - joining the celebrations going on around us
- **Paying** attention to the dominant stories that have shaped the people we know, so we can learn how to tell God's story in relevant and engaging ways
- **Giving** generously and sacrificially to meet the needs of others
- **Working** against injustice, oppression, and poverty in our city and in the world

INVITING IN WE INVITE OTHERS INTO COMMUNITY SO THEY CAN EXPERIENCE THE Gospel as they sojourn among us. “Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Jesus to listen to Him. The Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." (Luke 15:1-2). In our cultural setting, many people have become jaded toward the message of Christianity. They are not willing to hear about God unless they can see the Kingdom of God in action. So we encourage them to journey alongside us and observe how the Gospel affects our patterns of living, relating, working, and worshipping. Anyone who's curious about Jesus can sojourn among us, no strings attached.

Inviting in takes many different forms, including:

- **Practicing** hospitality (opening our homes and lives to others)
- **Eating** meals together
- **Cultivating** generosity
- **Gathering** together in missional community
- **Living** in repentance and faith (being open and honest about our sins and shortcomings)
- **Welcoming** sojourners and skeptics to belong in our community - even if they don't believe yet

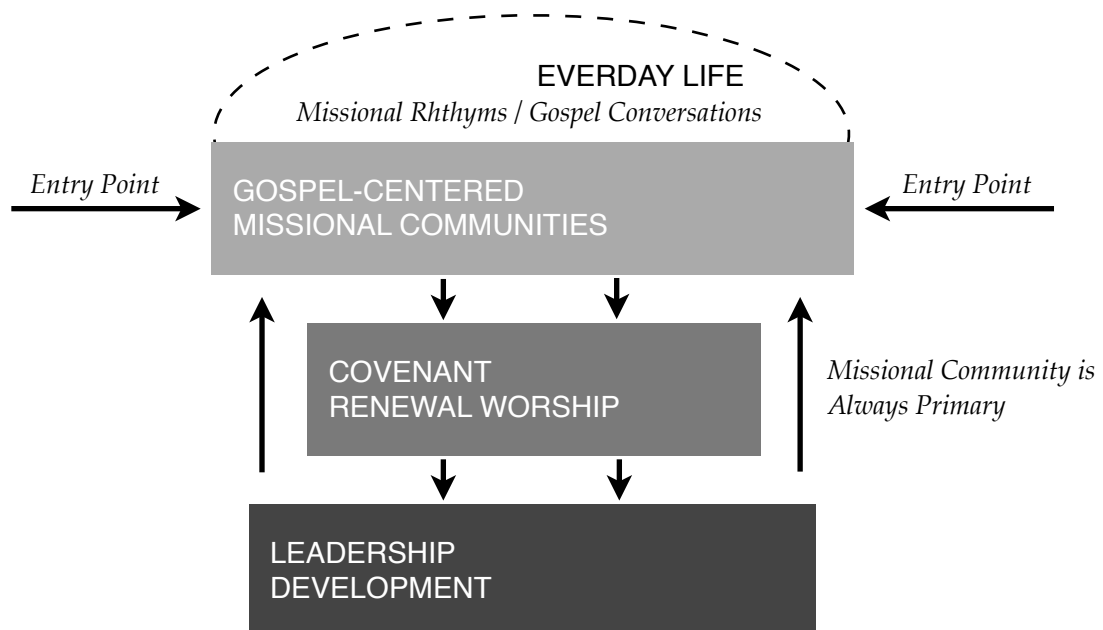
STRUCTURE

MANY CHURCHES OFFER A WIDE ARRAY OF PROGRAMS, EVENTS, AND SERVICES IN ORDER TO ATTRACT people and form them into disciples of Jesus. This program-centered approach to discipleship has a glaring weakness: while programs and events keep people busy, they rarely shape people's souls. Too many Christians are spiritually immature and culturally unaware - isolated from the real world by a thick layer of church activities.

DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

THE STRUCTURE OF VOX CITY CHURCH IS DIFFERENT by design. Remember, our goal is for the gospel to shape us and to find expression in our actual lives. So, we rely on a few simple structures to facilitate Gospel formation. We come together for weekly worship; we gather in smaller missional communities for life-on-life spiritual formation; and we develop leaders through formal training and

informal discipleship. Outside of these structures, we seek to simply live a "normal life" in the city, expressing the gospel, daily, as we practice the missional rhythms of living out and inviting in. *Rather than simply asking people to come to church, we are seeking to be the Church.*



THREE SIMPLE STRUCTURES

GOSPEL-CENTERED MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITIES OF PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE city that are studying the Bible together and intentionally applying it to each others' lives as they live on mission together. These aren't primarily Bible studies that only gather for the purpose of learning, nor are they primarily small groups that focus on accountability. MC's are something altogether different. They are covenant communities that are being formed by the gospel as they intentionally live out their identities and rhythms to bring the light of the gospel to the city.

COVENANT RENEWAL WORSHIP

OUR WEEKLY GATHERING OF Missional Communities. This isn't church. Church is a people, God's covenant people. Covenant renewal is what we do when we gather before God as a local community to worship. Our worship has a specific pattern and flow. We come together to be reminded of our need for God and to renew our commitment to him.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

WE ARE ALWAYS TRAINING NEW LEADERS to lead the mission. We want to see Missional Communities grow and multiply through out the city, so we intentionally train and equip people to lead missional community. This happens through formal training times (i.e. classes, books groups, Bible studies) and through informal discipleship (i.e. life-on-life mentoring).

STRATEGY

ENGAGE CULTURE, CREATE COMMUNITY, ESTABLISH A STRUCTURE AND MULTIPLY A MOVEMENT. WE will do these things using a mission-driven paradigm, which will probably be different from what you're used to.

Here's what it will look like...

ENGAGING CULTURE **LIVING OUT: BRINGING CHRIST TO THE CULTURE**

- **Leaving:** replacing Christian/church activities and programs with time spent engaging relationally together with sojourners (non-followers)
- **Living:** Participating in culture together (being "on their turf")
- **Listening:** Prayerfully responding to conversations in a way that makes the most of every opportunity
- **Loving:** Blessing with no strings attached
- **Relationally-driven evangelism** (process rather than crisis; people naturally reaching out to those in their sphere of influence)

Underlying these values is a gospel-driven, missionary ethos that equips people to engage the culture and pushes them toward following Christ wholeheartedly.

CREATING COMMUNITY **INVITING IN: DRAWING SOJOURNERS INTO COMMUNITY**

Being in missional community is not optional for followers of Jesus who align with VOX City Church. We will be together in life, spiritual formation, and mission.

- **Together in Life:** members of our community will be expected to share life together – no Lone Rangers (this creates natural, life-on-life discipleship and accountability)
- **Together in Soul:** spiritual formation in the context of community

- **Together** in Mission: no one engages culture alone. We serve and love others together
- **Inviting** In: Sojourners are welcomed into community where they can see the Kingdom life lived out ('belong before believing'); Christian community is the most important apologetic!
- **Immediate** involvement of young believers in mission/service to develop gifts and create ownership.
- **Creation** of "Middle Space" environments – neutral places where sojourners can question, converse, and dialogue about what it means to follow Jesus

ESTABLISHING STRUCTURE NETWORK OF MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

- **Weekly** covenant-renewal worship: focus on spiritual formation and renewing our vision and calling together (the church gathered exists to equip and support the church scattered)
- **Organic** leadership development (growing our own leaders through intentional shepherding and training)
- **Multiplication** of missional communities throughout the city, organically united and relationally connected
- **Leadership** Development (a community of leaders and emerging leaders learning from each other)

MULTIPLYING A MOVEMENT NETWORK OF MISSIONAL CHURCHES

- **Constant** prayer, vision-casting, a challenge to take ownership of missions
- **Leadership** development process will identify and raise up laborers for church-planting
- **Organic** and relationally-driven church-planting approach in South Africa and abroad (trusting God to raise up the right people; maximizing relationship so people always feel personally connected with missionaries/ planters)

COMMIT

WE'RE ASKING YOU TO CONSIDER JOINING OUR CHURCH PLANTING TEAM. BY BEING A PART OF THIS team, you're saying, "OK, I'm excited enough about this new church to help prepare for its inception." This team will develop in three phases, with corresponding levels of commitment.

PHASE 1 PREPARATION TEAM

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2009

- **COMMIT** to attending formal and informal gatherings for prayer and for shaping the community that will become VOX City Church
- **COMMIT** to earnest daily prayer for the planting team and for God's calling upon your life.
- **COMMIT** to intentional engagement with unbelievers and to community with others on the VOX team. At this stage, current involvement at whichever church you are a member may remain unchanged (with awareness that if you choose to move to the next phase, you will need to pull away from current church responsibilities)

At the end of this 3-month period, you may re-evaluate your fit and calling into the VOX City Church community.

PHASE 2 LAUNCH TEAM

JANUARY - JUNE 2010

- **COMMIT** to being held firmly accountable to identities and rhythms and to an outward-facing, others-centered lifestyle
- **COMMIT** to VOX as your primary faith community (thus breaking away from your current church and beginning to meet together for worship)
- **CONTINUED** intentional engagement with unbelievers and community with others on the VOX City Church team
- **COMMIT** to direct your financial giving to VOX in support of the Lord's work
- **COMMIT** to a 'whatever it takes' mentality, being willing to help in any and every capacity to create a successful church plant (note: this will mean embracing personal inconvenience for the sake of the community!)

If you choose to move on to join this team, you're saying, *"I want VOX to be my church, I sense God calling me to this, and I'm committing myself to help it become a reality."*

PHASE 3 CORE TEAM

JULY 2010 AND BEYOND

- **COMMIT** to protecting, preserving, and being an advocate for the VOX identities and rhythms
- **COMMIT** to own the financial, organizational, and ministry burdens of VOX
- **COMMIT** to enter the membership process of VOX and become an official core team member
- **COMMIT** to fall under the authority of VOX leadership in matters of accountability, lifestyle, and church discipline

By committing to this team, you're saying: *"I'm in for the long haul!"*

WANTED

MISSIONAL PEOPLE

TO BEGIN THIS NEW CHURCH, WE ARE NOT JUST LOOKING FOR WARM BODIES. WE ARE LOOKING FOR missionaries invested in culture – that is, missional people. This word ‘missional’ has become a popular buzzword in Christianity. But it’s easy to use the word without a clear understanding of what it means. A missional person has three primary characteristics.

A MISSIONARY SPIRIT

commissioned by Jesus to bring His Kingdom to others. This causes him to see his life as one of ‘being on mission with God’ – all the time. The missional person rejects the compartmentalizing of life into categories of ‘sacred’ and ‘secular.’ He rejects passivity in evangelism. He sees every conversation, every relationship, every interaction as a chance to make Christ’s invisible kingdom visible. His primary identity is that of ‘follower of Jesus’ – and this identity informs everything else.

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

these false ideas. He is committed to forming his character after Christ, believing that becoming a true disciple of Jesus is the norm, not the exception. And he is committed to living out his faith in the context of authentic community. Community is not a once-a-week gathering with some people to talk about sacred things. It is a daily engagement in mission and in life with fellow disciples. Practically, this means that others know, and are praying, for the people you’re reaching out to. Others know the triumphs and struggles of your life with God today. Others know your heart-idols and where you need to believe the gospel. Individualism and self-protection are consciously surrendered and replaced with the intentional sort of community that the early church modeled (Acts 2:42-47).

THE WORD MISSIONAL IS DERIVED FROM MISSIONARY.

A missional person is one who understands that being a Christian means being a missionary – a ‘sent one,’

IMMERSION IN MODERN CHRISTIANITY HAS PRODUCED, IN most of us, a very individualistic faith. Community is seen as an option rather than as a Kingdom essential. And discipleship – actual obedience to the radical commands of Jesus – is reserved for ‘super-Christians,’ not normal people. The missional person rejects

A HEART THAT BLEEDS FOR THE CULTURE

CHRISTIANITY IN OUR DAY HAS BECOME DEFINED more by what it is against than by what it embraces. This antagonism toward culture has created a whole Christian subculture that allows us to isolate ourselves from the world

to an amazing degree. The values of the kingdom of God will always be contrary to the values of the world, and so some element of disassociation is necessary. But the missional person rejects a 'separatist' attitude. He has a heart that bleeds for the culture. He sees worldly people not as enemies, but as lost people in bondage to sin and Satan. His love for them and for God compels him to engage the culture. He is willing to 'get his hands dirty' in the real messiness of people's lives. He is willing to leave the comfort and safety of 'Christian activities' so that he can immerse himself in the activities of culture and really be 'salt and light.' He has a 'go to them' mindset instead of a 'come to us' mindset. He is constantly wrestling with the tension of being 'in the world, but not of the world.' All of us are at different stages of this journey of discipleship. While we don't want to create a new legalism, we do want to be clear that an intellectual assent to these characteristics is not enough. The people whom God calls to VOX City Church will need to demonstrate the practical fruit of missional living and be willing to modify their lifestyle to reflect these values.

NON-NEGOTIABLE TRAITS FOR PREPARATION, LAUNCH, AND CORE TEAM MEMBERS

- **Passionate** love for Jesus
- **Visionary**, compelling leaders who don't just talk leadership, but actually model a God-centered life and can inspire others to follow
- **Saturated** in, and transformed by, the gospel of grace; leaders who don't just know the words of the gospel, but hear its music and live its realities
- **Flexible** and adaptable: people who can live with the ambiguity and messiness of a new venture
- **Risk-taking** personality: people who are not afraid to try new things for the sake of expanding God's Kingdom
- **Committed** to gospel-centered relationships with others; willing to live in transparent community (not 'lone rangers')

PARADIGM SHIFT

TO BE FRANK: THIS ENDEAVOUR WILL REQUIRE SACRIFICE. We're talking about an entirely different paradigm of church than what most of us are used to. It's going to require a high level of commitment. But really, we're only saying what Jesus did: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) The demands of the Kingdom trump everything else. We're not asking for a part of your life; we're asking for your life. Unashamedly. Unflinchingly. Without hesitation.

This endeavor will also require a change in your paradigm.

For example, most of us have come to value community as an option, not as a 'must-have.' But what we're asking is that you be committed to deep, heart-level, mission-oriented community with other people. *Community is not optional. Don't sign up unless you're willing to do life, transparently, with other people.*

MESSY AND UNPREDICTABLE

FINALLY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT planting a new church will be messy and unpredictable. All the things you've come to expect in an established church – top-quality worship, high-dollar sound systems, great kids' and youth programs, excellent facilities – are off the table. In their place, we offer you: the adventure of starting something brand new! If your tolerance for risk and messiness is low, you might be better off staying where you are. Below is a grid to help you decide whether VOX City Church will be a good fit for you.

DON'T JOIN US IF...

JOIN US IF...

You're looking to go to a church	<i>You're looking to be the church</i>
You're interested in doing outreach events	<i>You're interested in building an outward-facing, evangelistic culture</i>
You're looking for a good Sunday-morning ministry commitment	<i>You're looking for an all-week, lifestyle commitment to ministry</i>
You want to attract non-believers to a church service	<i>You want to live life and love Jesus among sojourners</i>
You think leadership is based on age, experience, or "putting in your time"	<i>You think leadership is based on radical obedience to Jesus</i>
You want to avoid the influences of culture	<i>You want to transform culture for the glory of God</i>
You think the church is a safe haven for the building up of believers	<i>You think the church is a radical movement of Jesus designed to expand His Kingdom</i>
You want to support missions	<i>You want to live missionally</i>
You want to teach people to be happy and successful in life	<i>You want to teach people to be happy in God and His supremacy in all of life</i>

Sure, we're trying to 'sell' you. We want people to join us. But if after reading all this, you sense any hesitation in your spirit, then please: don't be shy about saying, "No". We are praying for a core team of people who are passionate and committed, and we won't think less of anyone with the guts to say, "This isn't for me." The Kingdom is big, and this isn't the only expression of what God is doing.

WHAT NOW?

PRAY. THINK. QUESTION. PRAY MORE. IS THIS WHAT GOD IS CALLING YOU TO?

If it's not, then don't let anything persuade you to join us. *But if it is...then don't let anything keep you away!*

CONTACT INFO

Email: info@voxcc.com

Website: <http://voxcc.com>

¹ These ratings are according to a 2008 study (<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/world2008t.html>)

² This includes the suburbs of the Foreshore, CBD, Gardens, Green Point, Oranjezicht, Bo-Kaap, Signal Hill, Lion's Head, Tamboerskloof, Vredehoek, Woodstock, Salt River and Zonnebloem.

³ <http://www.naspers.co.za/>

Credit to Robert H. Thune for the language and ideas in much of this document, pertaining, especially, to vision and philosophy for missional church planting. Thanks, too, to the Coram Deo community (www.cdomaha.com), for its invaluable fingerprint on the work of church planting and, specifically, VOX City Church.